

REMARKS

The office action of January 21, 2011, has been carefully considered.

It is noted that claims 1-3 and 5-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph.

Claims 1-3 and 5-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claims 1, 5, 7 and 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over the patent to Michalik in view of the patent to Powell et al. '344.

In view of the Examiner's rejections of the claims, applicant has amended claims 1 and 5.

With the amendment to claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, first and second paragraphs are overcome and should be withdrawn.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims presently on

file differ essentially and in an unobvious, highly advantageous manner from the methods and constructions disclosed in the references.

Turning now to the references, and particularly to the patent to Michalik, it can be seen that this patent discloses a method of liquid quenching glass sheets. Michalik sprays the glass sheet with water before the glass sheet enters the basin containing water (see Fig. 1).

The patent to Powell et al. discloses a method of producing toughened and bent glass sheets.

The Examiner combined these references in determining that claims 1, 5, 7 and 9-12 would be unpatentable over such a combination. Applicant respectfully submits that neither of these references, nor their combination, teach the presently claimed invention. To begin with, neither of the references deals with cooling or quenching metal slabs. The cooling of glass involves different considerations than are encountered when cooling metal slabs. It would not be obvious for one skilled in the art of metal processing to look to references that deal with the processing of completely different materials, namely glass. However, even if the

references are relevant prior art, they do not teach the presently claimed invention. There is no teaching by the references of spraying slabs or sheets when they are in the cooling basin, as in the presently claimed invention. Furthermore, Michalik only teaches a two-step cooling in which the glass sheet is sprayed in a first step and then, in a second step the sheet is dipped into a cooling bath. There is no teaching of spraying in the bath, as in the present invention.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1, 5, 7 and 9-12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over a combination of the above-discussed references is overcome and should be withdrawn.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

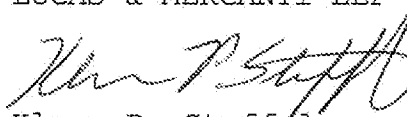
Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with this application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 02-2275.

HM-667

Respectfully submitted,

LUCAS & MERCANTI LLP

By

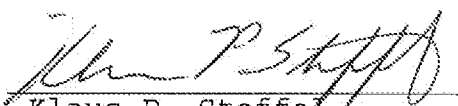
  
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